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# INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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REPORT

SUBJECT Popular Attitudes in Poland

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report

concerning various popular attitudes in Poland.

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Popular Attitudes in PolandGermany and Germans

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[redacted] the United States was justified in rearming West Germany, but only under strict supervision within the NATO framework.

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[redacted] The Bundeswehr seemed to have replaced the United States as the principal target of Polish Communist propaganda in the last two years. However, [redacted] this line had been particularly effective among the majority of Poles.

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[redacted] in [redacted] Silesia, ethnic Germans are highly unpopular among their Polish neighbors, who refer to them by the contemptuous nickname "Gusch".

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Permanence of Poland's Present Frontiers

[redacted] in 1945, the general expectation among the troops was that Poland would regain all of her pre-war territory and would in addition be permitted to annex part of Germany. There was no expectation that the U.S.S.R. would permanently retain eastern Poland until 1944, when doubts regarding Soviet intentions began to spread among the Polish forces.

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[redacted] most Poles are unhappy about the present boundaries and would be satisfied to return to the frontiers of 1939. Realistically speaking, however, they believe that the Soviet Union cannot be induced to return

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the former Polish eastern territories by any means short of war. On the other hand, the Poles feel that they will always be at the mercy of a possible future bargain between Russia and Germany which would restore the former German lands to Germany with no corresponding compensation to Poland.

### Soviet Intentions

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[ ] nothing short of a major armed conflict will dislodge the Soviets from their present position of supremacy in eastern Europe. There are many people in Poland, anti-Communists, who personally hope that war will occur. Expectations of this kind rose to high levels of intensity at the time of the Berlin blockade, the Korean War, and the Suez crisis.

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With regard to German reunification, [ ] the Soviets well know that the German people are solidly anti-Communist and would never tolerate a Communist regime that was not supported by Russian military power. Accordingly, [ ] only a bare possibility that the Soviets might someday agree to a united but neutralized Germany on the Austrian model. [ ] it more likely that the Soviets will maintain their hold on East Germany, hoping ultimately to extend their control over Western Europe by means short of war (i.e., by threats and subversion).

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[ ] the slogan "Communism throughout the whole world" is something that the Soviet leaders believe in "as they would the Koran". [ ] the U.S. policy of containment as having been successful for the time being in halting Soviet aggression in Europe, but [ ] the West is now faced with a serious challenge in the Soviet campaign to win over the uncommitted nations of Asia and Africa.

### Nuclear Disarmament

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[ ] depicted Polish public opinion as being skeptical concerning the possibilities of limiting the use of nuclear weapons by means of international agreement. Naturally, the average Pole fears the consequences of a nuclear conflict as much as any one else and would like to see the use of such weapons completely excluded. On the other hand, the majority of non-Communist Poles believe that their best hope that nuclear weapons will not be employed lies in the assurance that the United States continues to hold a margin of superiority in this field. They consider that the far-flung network of American bases in foreign countries constitutes an important part of the overall U.S. military advantage, and are unimpressed by propaganda claims that Soviet advances in rocketry have rendered these bases obsolete.

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[ ] the Rapacki Plan for an atom-free zone in Central Europe has had almost no popular appeal within Poland, and is generally regarded as a propaganda stunt for foreign consumption. He was pessimistic as to the prospects for success of direct U.S.-Soviet negotiations looking toward a system of nuclear control based on mutual inspection and detection. The Soviets would never allow nuclear inspectors to travel freely within their territory, though

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they might possibly permit the establishment of a few fixed observer stations. Any such agreement would be valueless, [redacted] since the Soviets could and would continue to manufacture and stockpile nuclear weapons in remote areas or underground installations. [redacted] past negotiations on this subject have aroused no great amount of interest or enthusiasm within Poland.

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### Gomulka Regime

[redacted] the initial enthusiasm for Gomulka swept Poland "like fire" in October, 1956. In contrast to the reports of most Western observers, however, [redacted] popular participation in the January 1957 national election [redacted] been a perfunctory discharge of a necessary obligation rather than as an enthusiastic manifestation of public support for the new regime.

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At first, nearly every one in Poland expected Gomulka to behave like another Tito and to take Poland out of the Warsaw Pact. Not only were these hopes disappointed, but Gomulka has progressively evidenced an intention to return to the former unpopular Stalinist policies by moves such as the following:

1. Continued adherence to the Warsaw Pact.
2. Increased unwillingness to tolerate criticism, as illustrated by recent restrictions on the freedom of the press.
3. Resumption of measures to circumscribe the private sector of the economy.
4. Renewed pressure against the Catholic Church.

[redacted] in the past year the political atmosphere in Poland had not been conducive to the free exercise of personal liberty, [redacted] no instances of specific new measures directed against the individual. [redacted]

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[redacted] alleging that Gomulka had endorsed the Nagy executions and had launched a campaign to reconstitute the agricultural collectives.

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[redacted] the regime will encounter great resistance from the Church and from the peasants, and [redacted] Gomulka will probably not be able to turn the clock back all the way, even if he wants to. However, [redacted] the signs of the times were sufficiently discouraging [redacted]

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Comparing Gomulka's position with Tito's, [redacted] passed over the obvious comparisons between the geographical situation of the two countries and pointed instead to the relative strengths of the Polish and Yugoslav Communist Parties as being the decisive difference. Tito [redacted] has many more Communists at his command; hence he can rule securely without Russian help. Gomulka, on the other hand, knows that the Communists have so little popular support in Poland that

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they would be swept out of office as soon as the Polish people and the armed forces were sure that the Soviet Union would not intervene militarily.

the Poles had been severely shocked by the unexpected lengths to which the Soviets had gone in suppressing the Hungarian revolution. Since Poland was a much bigger country than Hungary, however, [ ] doubted the Soviets would attempt to use force to bring a Polish government back into line except as a last resort.

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Poland's economic dependence upon the Soviet Bloc was cited [ ] as being the fundamental reason for its political dependence on the Kremlin. [ ] this factor [ ] more important either than the potential threat of Russian military intervention or the personal inclinations of the Polish Communist leadership. [ ] a larger grant of American economic assistance to the Gomułka regime in its early years would have been heart-warming indication of U.S. sympathy for the Polish people, [ ] doubted whether it would have accomplished much in the practical sense.

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Gomułka's position [ ] reasonably secure at the present time, though the Moscow-oriented Natolin faction continues to represent a potential source of opposition. He considers the most unpopular figure in the regime to be GYRANKIEWICZ.

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[ ] summed up [ ] estimate of Polish internal conditions by quoting the saying that there are only three kinds of people in Poland: those who have been in prison; those who are in prison; and those who will be in prison (it being always understood that those who have been in prison before may find themselves there again).

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#### Czechoslovakia

[ ] expressed considerable antipathy toward the Czechs, describing them as a sly, cunning and untrustworthy people who had slavishly worked for Hitler while the Poles struggled against him. [ ] the Czechs living near border areas would go out of their way to inform on a man who appeared to be trying to escape to the West, and that for this reason Polish defectors [ ] preferred to take the route through East Germany even though it was in some cases longer.

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#### Standard of Living

[ ] economic conditions seemed [ ] the whole to have improved during the last two years. [ ] the prices of durable goods have risen considerably. Prices of foodstuffs appeared also to have risen, though

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have noticeably, and food supplies are adequate. Offsetting such price increases were recent advances in salaries, wages and pensions. [REDACTED] 25X1  
old-age pensions had risen from 200 to 600 slotys, and pensions for disabled veterans in his category from 90 slotys in former years to 800 slotys at present.

[REDACTED] 25X1  
[REDACTED] virtually the only commodity which could not be purchased legally nowadays was foreign exchange. Illegal dealers do a brisk business in foreign currency, especially dollars, with those desiring to travel abroad as well as with those seeking safety and liquidity for their savings. [REDACTED] 25X1

[REDACTED] the black-market price of the dollar was between 100-120 slotys. In the preceding winter, [REDACTED] the dollar rate climbed as high as 180-200 slotys. 25X1

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